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EXAMINER

LOFTIS, JOHNNA RONEE

ART UNIT

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 11/24/10 has been entered.
2. Claims 1-21, 23-29, 31-52 and 57-65 pending and have been examined below.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claim amendments have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.
4. Further, Applicants argue the combination does not teach subsequent modifications made to a linked procedure definition after linking are automatically reflected in the linked procedure. Applicant expands stating there is no teaching or suggestion in Sarin that, after a procedure is carried out, modifications to the definition can be reflected in the procedure. These arguments are repeated from the previous correspondence. Examiner's stance has not changed. Examiner points to column 9, lines 51+ where it is disclosed that once the procedure is complete, modifications can be made (adding an ad-hoc task) wherein the process definition is modified and the change is reflected in the process. Examiner upholds prior rejections in view of Sarin and ProjectDash.

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5. In terms of the Official Notice remarks, notice has been on the record since 2008. There has not been a sufficient challenge to the Notice as indicated in the action dated 4/30/09, therefore Examiner's stance is unchanged and Per MPEP 2144.03(c), these statements are taken as admitted prior art because no sufficient traversal of this statement was made in the subsequent response.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1-21, 23-29, 31-52 and 57-65 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sarin et al, US 6,003,011, in view of ProjectDash, as evidenced by the article entitled, "ProjectDash Drives Consistency in Communicating Project Status Online using Innovative Graphical Project Dashboard", further in view of vom Scheidt et al, US 20030126003.

As per claim 1, Sarin et al teaches specifying one or more actions corresponding to a specified procedure and, for each specified action, one or more resources associated with the action; indicating an action order, including indicating whether the two or more of the specified actions are to be performed in an order-dependent manner or in an order-independent manner; presenting the specified actions to a user in a presentation format; and enabling the user to perform the specified action by providing access to the resources associated with the specified

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procedure (column 3, lines 30-67 – a tasks set forth in a workflow process with each resource associated; icons represent tasks to be performed; resources are made available to user to perform tasks; column 4, lines 11-20 – interrelationship of tasks set forth indicating order-dependency); and linking at least one of the procedures to the at least one pre-existing procedure definition such that subsequent modifications made to the linked procedure definition after linking are automatically reflected in the linked procedure (column 9, lines 51-67 - a change to the overall process is determined. The user then takes the ad-hoc process instance and generalizes the variables to create a process definition from the process instance, (i.e., a change to the instance is reflected in the definition and thereby, the procedure that is carried out based on the definition reflects the modification as well).

Sarin et al does not explicitly teach displaying a dashboard to the user to display or link to status information of procedures started or monitored by the user, wherein at least one of the procedures is marked to alert the user that the procedure requires attention. ProjectDash teaches a method for capturing project status and communication performance. A graphical dashboard is used to keep users current on critical aspects of a project. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include in the system of Sarin et al the ability to display a dashboard with project status as taught by the ProjectDash article since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements and in the combination each element merely would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

Further, the combination of Sarin et al and ProjectDash does not explicitly teach a pending-flag to alert the user that the marked procedure has a pending action that has not been completed and

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that a next action depends on the completion of the pending action. Vom Scheidt et al teaches status flags (paragraphs 0075-0079) and further presents notifications that actions are pending (figure 7). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include in the "" system of "" the ability to "" as taught by "" since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements and in the combination each element merely would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

As per claim 2, Sarin et al teaches the actions are identified by process patterns associated with the procedures (column 4, lines 11-20 - interrelationships established).

As per claim 3, Sarin et al teaches identifying one or more common action patterns; abstracting each reusable common action pattern; and providing a template including the abstracted patterns for the procedures based on business context (column 7, lines 1-22)

As per claim 4, Sarin et al teaches comprising enabling the user to modify the template with ad-hoc collaboration actions based on work practice for a particular business scenario (column 7, lines 46-65; column 10, lines 36-63).

As per claim 5, Sarin et al teaches automatically adapting the template based on collaborative filtering or history tracking (column 7, lines 46-65 – historical contributions used to adapt template).

As per claim 6, Sarin et al teaches the action makes a process pattern plug&execute by launching web-based services with semantics and functionality (column 8, lines 51-58).

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As per claim 7, Sarin et al teaches introducing rules and pre-configuring ad-hoc coordination patterns to handle exceptions and dependencies within actions (column 7, line 67—column 8, line 2 – interrelationships retained).

As per claim 8, Sarin et al does not explicitly teach providing hybrid service that encapsulates transactional enterprise services and the related exception handling. Examiner takes official notice that it is old and well known to provide exception handling within workflow systems. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate standard exception handling into the invention of Sarin et al since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements, and in the combination each element merely would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized the results of the combination were predictable.

As per claim 9, Sarin et al teaches an action launches an enterprise service directly or dissolves the service through a request to an UDDI server (column 1, lines 41-67 – column 3, lines 30-67).

As per claim 10, Sarin et al teaches comprising instantiating a sub-procedure from the specified procedure (column 3, lines 48-56 – scanning is optional sub-procedure).

As per claim 11, Sarin et al teaches the specified procedure controls the sub procedure including stopping, freezing and waiting for the sub-procedure (column 7, lines 23-46).

As per claim 12, Sarin et al teaches the actions are grouped into phases (column 3, lines 35-39 – column 6, lines 29-45 – life cycle of process instance).

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As per claim 13, Sarin et al teaches a navigational model includes a phase indicator to navigate by phases of the procedure and display of actions and deliverables associated with the phase (column 3, lines 30-67 – display shows progress along with deliverables).

As per claim 14, Sarin et al teaches completion of a phase is a gate in a process that requires satisfaction of conditions from a higher level semantic before completion of the phase (column 3, lines 46-67, column 4, lines 1-10 – one finished task “calls forth” the next task).

As per claim 15, Sarin et al teaches enabling a user to include ad-hoc collaboration actions (column 9, lines 50-67).

As per claim 16, Sarin et al teaches the ad-hoc collaboration actions comprise delegating a procedure or portion thereof, delegating an action that has been started, requesting approval, requesting a review or getting an opinion of another user (column 9, lines 50-67).

As per claim 17, Sarin et al teaches associating deliverables, contributors and resources with an action (column 6, lines 5-11).

As per claim 18, Sarin et al teaches providing displays for tracking the status of deliverables, contributors, resources, metrics, accomplish view, forecast view, procedure tree view or delta view (column 3, lines 46-67; column 6, lines 29-45 – lifecycle of tracks status of what has been accomplished).

As per claim 19, teaches the metrics comprise frequency of use, average temporal duration, efficiency, number of breakdowns, iterations and quality of outcome

As per claim 20, Sarin et al teaches the accomplish view comprises new deliverables, completed steps, steps started but not yet completed or the difference between two action

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completion dates (column 3, lines 46-67; column 6, lines 29-45 – lifecycle of tracks status of what has been accomplished).

As per claim 21, Sarin et al teaches the delta view provides a display comprising the differences between an accomplish from a first time and an accomplish view from a second time

As per claim 23, Sarin et al teaches providing aggregate status information to another application or user interface pattern (column 5, lines 4-24 – status shown).

As per claim 24, Sarin et al teaches the list of one or more actions comprises specifying whether an action is optional, mandatory or protected (column 9, line 64 – column 10, line 4 – permissions indicate protection).

As per claim 25, Sarin et al teaches enabling the user to specify that the specified procedure requires collaboration among two or more contributors (column 3, lines 46-67 - administrator fills in amounts, then account must review as well as manager must sign).

As per claim 26, Sarin et al teaches enabling the user to determine a guided procedure trigger (column 4, lines 10-20).

As per claim 27, Sarin et al teaches enabling the user to back track to previous actions (column 10, lines 25-35 – user may backtrack and modify processes).

As per claim 28, Sarin et al does not explicitly teaches automatically invalidating the specified procedure in selected cases where the guided procedure trigger ceases to exist.

Examiner takes official notice that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that the failure to determine a procedure trigger would render a procedure invalid since there would be nothing set forth to indicate procedure order. The invalidation of a procedure without a

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procedure trigger would allow for a more efficient workflow system since those procedures without specified order dependencies would not be executed.

As per claim 29, Sarin et al does not explicitly teach modification of the template is aided by a wizard. While Sarin et al teaches the modification of templates (column9, line 51 - column 10, line 63). Examiner takes official notice that it is old and well known to employ template wizards that enable a user to more accurately complete a template. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate standard wizard technology into the invention of Sarin et al since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements, and in the combination each element merely would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized the results of the combination were predictable.

As per claim 62, Sarin et al does not explicitly teach the procedures included in the dashboard are procedures to which the user is a contributor, or procedures that the user has selected to monitor. ProjectDash teaches an internet based product that summarizes project activities and clearly communicates project status and performance to key stakeholders (monitoring of the procedures involved). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include in the system of Sarin et al the ability to monitor procedures included in the dashboard as taught by ProjectDash since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements and in the combination each element merely would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

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Claims 31-41 and 63 are directed to the system that performs the method of claims 1-7, 10, 11, 18 and 62 and are therefore rejected using the same rationale set forth above.

Claims 42-52 and 64 are directed to the article of manufacture with stored instructions operable to perform the method of claims 1-7, 10, 11, 18 and 62 and are therefore rejected using the same rationale set forth above.

Claims 57-61 and 65 are directed to the system to perform the method of claims 1-7, 10, 11, 18 and 62 and are therefore rejected using the same rationale set forth above.

Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Knyphausen et al, US 20020111787 – client-driven workload environment

Maritzen et al, US 7069511 – platform independent on-line project management tool

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JOHNNA R. LOFTIS whose telephone number is (571)272-6736. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8am-4:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lynda Jasmin can be reached on 571-272-6782. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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/Johnna R Loftis/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3624